



Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

438 Dubuque Street • Manchester, New Hampshire 03102-3546

Telephone (603) 669-4664 • Fax (603) 669-4350

Foreword

Preparing a Master Plan for Your Community is an interactive CD-ROM, accompanied by a supporting handbook, to assist New Hampshire communities with their planning efforts.

The Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC), under the direction of an oversight committee of state, regional and town planners, has produced this useful new tool. *Preparing a Master Plan for Your Community* is intended to be used by volunteers, community officials, and professional planners alike, as it provides helpful information, offers instructions, and condenses the master planning process into easy-to-follow steps and procedures.

Master planning is the foundation of community planning. While almost all New Hampshire communities have prepared master plans at one time or another, many communities are at a loss when it comes time to update these plans. Some communities have master plans that by today's standards are too lengthy, contain too much information, and lack, often, the key components of community visioning and land use planning.

Preparing a Master Plan for Your Community addresses these issues by

- educating the user about what it means to plan and why it is important to adopt a master plan
- walking the reader through the essential steps of preparing, adopting, and implementing a master plan
- providing interactive capabilities and a bibliography that references a variety of planning-related publications, resources, videos, articles, websites, books, and manuals

While it is not the intention of this handbook to develop a model master plan for any particular community, or to serve as a substitute for the consultation of a planning professional, *Preparing a Master Plan for Your Community* is instructional, easy-to-use, and transferable from one community to another. *Preparing a Master Plan for Your Community* also serves as an excellent introduction to planning for members of local planning boards, zoning boards of adjustment, conservation commissions, boards of selectmen, city councilors, and students, among others.

The interactive CD-ROM will enable users to easily maneuver directly to the information most useful to them. Much of what has been constructed is built upon the innovative Planner on a Disc created by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission in Springfield, Massachusetts.

The CD-ROM includes several important master planning tools such as how to conduct a smart growth audit and a community visioning process. The smart growth audit is a checklist that communities can use to review existing plans and regulations for the inclusion and implementation of smart growth principles. Many communities across New Hampshire are including a chapter on smart growth in their master plans; and community visioning is now a mandatory section in all master plans as required by state statutes. A step-by-step guide on how to prepare existing and future land use maps has also been included on the CD-ROM.

The SNHPC looks forward to hearing what experiences you have in using this new interactive tool. Please feel free to e-mail comments to email@snhpc.org or send a note to: SNHPC, 438 Dubuque Street, Manchester, NH 03102-3546.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M.N. Sharma', is positioned above the printed name and title.

M.N. Sharma
Executive Director
Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission